

In response to the election requirement, Applicants hereby respond as follows:

The requirement for election set forth in the Action is hereby expressly traversed, and reconsideration and withdrawal of the requirement are respectfully requested.

It is submitted that the above-listed Species I and II are so closely related to one another that their examination could be most efficiently and effectively carried out in a single application.

However, in the event the election requirement is maintained, Applicants hereby provisionally elect Species II for prosecution in the present application. Presently, Claims 44-56 all appear to apply to Species II.

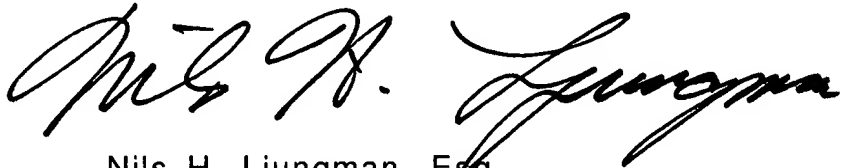
It is respectfully requested that an action on the merits be issued at an early date.

If mailed, I, the person signing this certification below, hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on the date indicated in the certification of

Docket No.: NHL-SCT-21 US
Serial No.: 09/758,903

mailing on the transmittal letter sent herewith, or if facsimile transmitted, I, the person signing this certification below, hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office on the date indicated in the certification of facsimile transmission on the transmittal letter which is being facsimile transmitted herewith.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nils H. Ljungman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nils" and last name "Ljungman" being the most prominent parts.

Nils H. Ljungman, Esq.
Attorney for the Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 25,997
Name of person signing certification
Nils H. Ljungman & Associates
P.O. Box 130
Greensburg, PA 15601-0130
Telephone:(724) 836-2305
Facsimile:(724) 836-2313